TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

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Forces at Work in the Larger Village*

EMORY J. BROWN

• An understanding of the forces at work in the community is a prerequisite to promoting community betterment. One can assume that ministers and church people are constantly seeing areas of community living that could stand improvement and they are very desirous of changing the situation that now exists. However, community action only results when those in positions of power to make the decisions with regard to a specific action consent to do so.

The Goals

If the church desires to serve the community and its people, what are the goals toward which it will work? The often mentioned church goals for a better community include such areas as good relations with minority groups, good schools and libraries, housing, health and sanitation, recreation and parks, safety and transportation, social welfare, better government, economic justice, personal conduct, and extension of the Christian faith and life.

The needs are different in various communities, and each church faces the task of making an inventory of the changes required to develop a Christian community and assigning priorities to the solution of the most pressing problems.

Community Action

Community action toward any goal can be seen as a sequence of happenings even though in reality it is an ongoing process. The phases of any community action can be classified into three parts.

1) First, the idea must be initiated by an individual or group who gains approval of the idea and sees that things get underway for translating the idea into action. Perhaps the minister initiates the idea of a recreational program for the community by a sermon. However, it is not enough to give birth to an idea unless the machinery is developed to have the idea translated into action.

2) The idea must be sponsored by groups who have the needed community resources for achieving the goal. For a recreational program, the church together with the P. T. A. might be sponsoring groups.

3) The initiators and sponsoring groups must develop community organization techniques or the means by which the resources are mobilized to reach the action goal, such as the recreation program. Newspaper, radio, sermons and face-to-face visits are the techniques by which appeals are made for a community project. Thus, the community residents, their leaders, resources, and skills are all inextricably interrelated in the process of achieving any community goal.

The "Power-Structure"

Not all community residents enter into the making of community decisions. The need for initiating some kind of action might arise from the people in general, and eventually the people must approve the action taken and be a part of the resulting

Photo by Eva Luoma

* From an address before the Presbyterian (U.S.A.) Conference of the Town and Country Church, Weedsport, N. Y., March 1954.

consequences. An understanding of the power structure of any community, that is, those who are responsible for initiating ideas and getting things done, is basic to any phase of community development. "Power" refers here to the acts of men moving other men to act—the ability of a group or individual to run things—to influence what takes place.

Who are the individuals and groups within the community who have power to influence events? If the church is interested in promoting action which results in a better community, it is necessary to identify who makes decisions and the way in which these individuals acquire the right or capacity to make these decisions legitimate. An analysis of the social structure helps to explain why things happen as they do.

Persons with Influence

The possession of access to groups and individuals both within and outside who have resources needed for a community project is a source of influence. Some individuals have extensive acquaintanceships with groups and individuals who are important in the achievement of a community goal. Knowing the right person in the community, or the proper channels to go through, puts a person in a rather influential position. This factor is important today because many projects in local communities are dependent upon state or national funds, and men who control the funds occupy state and national offices. In two different Pennsylvania communities, schools were located at one area rather than at another, where need was equally present, because a business man in each case was personally acquainted with the proper authorities in the state office.

The persons who generally have high standing in the community are professionals, such as clergymen, doctors, lawyers, and judges, teachers and educators, editors, civic-minded businessmen, and informal leaders of friendship groups. Organizations with respect generally include churches, schools, farmers' organizations, civic clubs, chambers of commerce, YMCA, welfare agencies, etc. In any community there are also natural leaders who are deferred to by other people. They may be presidents or officers in some organizations but more often they are not. Every church has several of these natural leaders. In bringing about a reform with a church or community, it is necessary to spot these key people who can promote a program or oppose it.

Not all Churches have Community Influence

Ministers and churches are not equally respected, so that some have higher standing than others. The standing of a church in the community will depend on several factors. A Protestant church in a Roman Catholic neighborhood may be held in low esteem because it is associated with employers or upper income groups. A Roman Catholic church in a Protestant community may be looked down upon because of ancient religious prejudices. Many times the impressive physical structure, the type of clothes worn by church members, determine the church's standing.

If the people of a community view the church as working for the public interest instead of its own special interest group, that church will come to be held in high esteem.

Tangible Service Gives Prestige

While people have widely different standards of respect, those organizations and persons of high standing generally offer real services to the community. Organizations which provide services to meet the needs of the people are associated with symbols of good.

The respected groups and individuals identify themselves with the values America respects, such as democracy, individual enterprise, Christianity, patriotism, etc. The person who influences others knows how to manipulate symbols which appeal to the sentiments of the people.

If the church is interested in promoting its standing in the eyes of indifferent or antagonistic groups, perhaps it can think of projects supported by the church, or any elements of the church program which are similar to those of other groups in the community. It is important to let non-church organizations know where the church stands on local issues. In general, the communication lines must be kept open between the church and community groups. By properly interpreting its stand on crucial issues and its social action program, the church might win respect from even indifferent and antagonistic groups.

Prestige and Power

Some groups have both prestige or standing and influence or power, while some have just prestige and others just power. Power and respectability do not always go together. A teacher or a doctor, a church or a welfare agency may be most respected, and yet have little or no influence on crucial community issues. Some have power plus prestige. If a group has power and uses it for the general good, it will also gain prestige, but it may take time and effort.

Sometimes the influential leaders in a community work through the church because it gives respectability to their program. At times these leaders apply pressure on the church leaders to support and approve one of their ideas, or to remain neutral in the public opinion molding process. It is important to note that these men of influence in the community are usually church members.

Recognition by church leaders and ministers of the loyalties, motives, attitudes and values of these men of influence is a prerequisite to development of a church program which is influential in the community.

Church Action

In setting up a plan of action for the community it is necessary for the church to determine: 1) what the church can do; 2) what is appropriate for a church-related group to do on its own; 3) analyze the church's situation in the community; and 4) to see which non-church organizations are likely to join hands with the church in working toward its goals.

There seem to be several practical steps involved in a church program for community development: 1) Decide what the goals of the church are for promoting a Christian community; 2) study where the community now stands with respect to these goals; 3) set up a program to improve conditions so the goals are reached.

An effective technique for ministers to use is to build friendship relationships with the individuals who have influence in the community. It is important to exert this influence before the decision-maker commits himself. Once having taken a stand, it is difficult for a person to alter his position on a question.

Effective church action toward community goals often requires securing the help of other groups. If the idea comes from the influential individuals and organizations, it has a far better chance of becoming accepted and put into effect than if it develops in a group with little or no influence.

"Give and Take"

By itself the church might have little influence but in combination with other organizations capacity for influencing events might increase tremendously. For example, in the area of solving the town's recreation problems, the church might decide to cooperate with other groups who are also working to solve recreation problems, such as Boys' clubs, Service clubs, YMCA-YWCA, schools, Veterans groups, Scouts, Recreation Commissions, etc. In building community relations with these groups, the church must develop a give-and-take spirit.

Finally, the church must not only think of what it can gain by working with other groups but also what the church can offer other groups. It should never think of itself as being "supported" by the community.

The greatest and noblest pleasure which men can have in this world is to discover new truths; and the next is to shake off old prejudices.

—FREDERICK THE GREAT

Photo by Eva Luoma

The Larger Parish

JAMES M. CARR

• The Larger Parish program is developing in a very fine way among Presbyterian U.S. town and country churches. Beginning several years ago, we now have the parish organization functioning in more than a dozen parishes—with approximately fifty churches.

But what is the Larger Parish? As I have traveled, and talked to many people, I have discovered certain misconceptions about its purpose and function. Some of these are stated in the following negative answers to our question.

What It Is Not

The Larger Parish program is not intended to be limited to churches which are too small and too weak to be financially "self-supporting."

Neither is it just a glorified name for a larger group of churches. (I have actually heard this expression used.) In some presbyteries more churches have been added to an already existing group and named a "Larger Parish"—with no provision for setting up the Larger Parish organization and obtaining more leadership.

The Larger Parish is not just a temporary expedient to bring churches to the place where they no longer need the parish program. Churches are urged to "come in," but also to "stay in," even though each may develop into a strong church with a good program. Their strength is needed to help the program of the weaker churches in the parish.

The Larger Parish is not just for small churches. One of our largest parishes is composed of eleven churches, one of which is an urban church of more than 500 members. Another parish is made up of a church with more than 1100 members, together with the four chapels sponsored by that church.

(*Continued on page 4*)

The Larger Parish is not a "cure all" to solve all the problems of small, weak, struggling rural churches. There is nothing magical in it. Careful study beforehand and careful planning in developing the program after the parish is organized are necessary.

The Larger Parish is not just a last resort to be used after everything else has been tried unsuccessfully.

It is not intended merely to solve the financial problems of weak churches. Sometimes a church may be paying all its bills and yet have an inadequate program which needs to be strengthened, and can be strengthened in a Larger Parish.

What Then, Is It?

The Larger Parish is a plan of organization through which two or more churches located in the same general community area cooperate to provide for each church individually and for the churches jointly a better total church program than they can provide if they work independently of each other.

The churches are organized into a parish, after careful study of their programs, and a survey of the total religious needs of the community. The parish should include all the churches of the area.

According to this the "self-supporting" church is included. It should continue to be "self supporting," but in the parish it benefits by the larger program of cooperative projects and activities for all the churches. The stronger church contributes leadership, equipment and financial strength, which brings new life to the smaller churches. In turn the smaller open country churches feed membership and leadership into the larger and stronger churches.

Constitution and Council

The minimum essential for a group of churches to become a Larger Parish is to be organized under a Council, which is composed of three or four persons elected by each church. We strongly recommend the adoption of a constitution, which is merely a written agreement to a plan by which the churches will cooperate.

Program

The Council meets quarterly and plans a program. Each church will develop just as much of a total program as its membership, equipment and resources make possible. This would include a full program of preaching services, Sunday School, Men's Work, Women's Work, and Youth Work. In addition, there would be parish-wide planning and development of various phases of the program which can be done better together than separately.

Staff

After the Council plans—what then? The staff members of the parish are the employed persons who carry out the plans made by the Council. The "staff" may be only the pastor in a parish of two or three small churches, or a "multiple ministry" in a parish composed of what formerly was two or more groups of churches.

A parish of six to ten churches would normally have two or three pastors and a director of Christian Education. One parish of six churches has a staff composed of a pastor for the six churches, a full-time seminary student assistant, a full-time director of Christian Education, and three laymen who are assigned regularly to preach in the churches. Another parish of five churches has a pastor and five laymen (one for each church) who preach regularly in the churches. Another parish of five churches near a seminary has a pastor and a seminary student for each church. The student preaches in the church on Sundays during the school year, and spends the entire summer with the church in a regular pastoral ministry.

Equipment

Yes, the parish program needs more equipment than the average small church can afford. In the parish each church is encouraged to improve and enlarge its own equipment as it can. In addition, there would be special equipment owned by the churches jointly, and used by the staff in serving all the churches. Such equipment would be used for visual aids, duplicating, recreation, etc. One parish operates a station wagon, used for transporting large groups to various parish meetings and activities.

Yes, It Costs More!

An enriched program which better meets the total religious needs of our people costs more money. Usually our Church Extension committees make special appropriations for larger parishes. But these appropriations should be made on a plan of diminishing the amount each year. Our experience has been that, with the enriched program, the financial response from the people is better. In due time many parishes cannot only become stronger churches, but they can actually become "self-supporting," relieving Church Extension funds for other uses. One parish of eight rural churches became so successful financially that it adopted a foreign missionary and assumed responsibility for a large part of his support.

Don't Be Discouraged

The first year is the hardest. It usually takes about a year to two years for the churches to change from their previous attitude to one of cooperation. Some churches enter primarily for "what we can get out of it." But they soon realize that their best benefit is found in a new attitude of "what we can put into it." It also usually takes from one to two years for the parish Council to begin to run smoothly. One pastor who has served his parish of five churches for five years wrote: "Our Council is functioning better than ever now. It has taken three or four years to make it effective. We believe the cooperative Council would be a tremendous help for any group of churches."

Editor's Note: *Dr. Carr has offered to provide copies of his Manual, THE LARGER PARISH AND THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S., to those requesting it, and to assist in establishing an interdenominational parish which includes one or more Presbyterian U.S. churches. His address is: 341-B Ponce de Leon Avenue, N.E., Atlanta 5, Georgia.*

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Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

No Simple Plan Will Work

C. CLYDE MITCHELL

• The Administration proposals for agriculture suggest only one important change for American agriculture—the flexible price support. Otherwise they continue almost unchanged the subsidies, controls, and assistance to agriculture which have grown up during past decades. I have two objections to the proposals: 1) Merely to continue the broad outlines of the past course is not good enough, and 2) the one major change suggested is a change for the worse. The Administration's proposals are geared to the principle of a contracting and under-employed American economy rather than to the principle of an expanding and prosperous economy.

Production and Consumption

The one major change, flexible price supports, will not produce the economic effects that the Administration expects it to produce. Contrary to the belief of the President, farm price reductions to the 75 percent lower limit specified will not materially reduce agricultural production nor increase consumption. On the production side, farmers respond quite readily to a rising price by increasing production; but they do not and cannot respond to a falling price by reducing production. On the consumption side, a fall in farm prices results in a much smaller drop, or no drop at all, in the prices consumers pay, because of inflexibility in the marketing margin. Even when retail prices drop, American consumers do not customarily buy more agricultural products, but spend their windfall saving on other things.

Are High Fixed Price Supports the Right Answer?

In the first place, I think it is a mistake to call them high when farm income generally is still below urban income and when the average farm income (that of the middle and lower group, omitting the large corporate farmers) is still greatly below urban income of similar middle and lower groups. No one should claim, however, that the present program of fixed price supports is the right and final answer to the problems of American agriculture. If solutions are not found in two other problem areas, our present program of price supports or any other program of price or income supports, including the flexible plan, will prove extremely costly and wasteful. Conversely, if those two problem areas are correctly handled, any one of several price support plans would work fairly well.

The first major problem that price policy alone will not solve is that of expanding consumption of agricultural products among Americans (and to some extent people in other lands) to use our aricultural production as it should be used, to eat, to wear, to improve levels of living. The second is the problem of the one-third of our farm families who are working uneconomic farm units and living at a level far below our American ideas of decency. To solve the first of these problems will require new consumption expansion programs, far beyond anything proposed by this Administration, or indeed by past Administrations. To solve the second will require new action programs aimed at assisting the low-income farmer to achieve a better living.

The American farmers would be quite willing for changes to be made in the type and level of price supports if those two fundamental problems of consumption expansion and farm poverty were simultaneously made subjects of adequate legislation and governmental action programs. In the absence of such a determined attack on fundamental difficulties of our economy, congressional leaders are quite correct in their continued approval of present levels of price support.

Adjustment

The Administration has accepted

too uncritically the allegation that agriculture is somehow over-expanded by war and that it should willingly accept downward adjustment in the manner of gunpowder and aircraft piston-engine makers. I do not think this is a correct analysis of our problem.

Frankly, I see no possible way for American agriculture to make any sizable adjustment downward without admitting that the American system cannot prevent a depression in one of its major industries—agriculture. I see no reason for American agriculturists being forced to make any sizable adjustment downward—they know that their products are needed by human beings both here and throughout the world. The problem looks fairly simple to them—do something to adjust the crazy out-of-kilter economic system which lets their food and cotton lie idle while people need it. Do something in peacetime which accomplishes much the same effect as far as full employment, full production and adequate distribution are concerned, that was accomplished in wartime, but without the killing. And if we can do that, we can aid materially in helping to build a world where the killing will not be necessary.

To take the course I have suggested would mean profound, dramatic action on the part of government. But unless these things are done, I have no great amount of hope that the current retreat in agricultural income will not lead to a genuine depression in agriculture.

"The Expanding Economy" Ideal

For some time I have been told by friends of mine in Congress that they acknowledged the necessity of some modification in present price-support and storage programs, but that the interests of their farmer-constituents demanded that no significant weakening of the present level of supports should be permitted unless there was some certainty that the consumption and poverty problems would be solved. One Congressman said that he would have to have all these things in a "package deal" before he would vote to reduce price supports. At his request I have outlined what I think should be in this bill:

1. Such a "package deal" would be a very big and important bill—it would be almost an "enabling act" to carry out the broad and optimistic principles of the Employment Act of 1946. It would commit the United States to the virtual abolition of malnutrition in this nation of ours. It would accept the principle that health education, including participation in an improved hot-lunch program, is an essential part of the education process for all our children. It would make money and food available to get the program in operation in practically all schools. It would include adequately-financed programs of distribution of healthful foods to all our citizens who are not able, because of low incomes, to pay for a good diet. It would certainly include, on a nation-wide basis, most of the features of the "domestic food allotment plans."

2. Our two most serious "surplus" crops, wheat and cotton, are needed throughout the world by people whose diet and living level are so poor that even our large surpluses are very small in comparison to the need. Our surpluses can be very important levers, however, if they are used correctly. Correct use demands that the American goods be funnelled mainly into educational channels, to support large-scale vocational training programs among the youth of the underdeveloped areas. This use of the food will result in reduced population pressure, rather than increased, as the nations are enabled more quickly to make the transition from rural to industrial life.

3. To guarantee that our nation could carry out the commitments contained in this broad attack on the under-consumption problem, as well as for reasons of strategy and weather insurance, we should adopt the principle of "security storage" of all storable crops at a level which could stabilize our domestic consumption and enable us to keep up our international commitments. The level would be different for different crops, but I suggest that for most storables it be roughly one full year's domestic production.

4. The part of the program aimed at better utilization of the under-employed human resources on the low-income American farms would not cost much in non-recoverable outlay. Farm Security Administration experience indicates that the most important way to enable low-income farmers to intensify their economic operations and achieve a decent living is to be able to secure adequate credit at low interest rates. This credit, if FSA experience is a guide, will be repaid with virtually no loss.

5. Concentration on the poverty-problem does not mean that the middle-income family farm is to be neglected—adequate credit for improvements in farm organization should be made available, and widespread improvements within the framework of better farm-and-home planning, soil conservation, and improved land-use continue to be necessary.

6. Then, after fairly definite assurance has been achieved (in the above-mentioned segments of this omnibus bill for agriculture) that the problems will be attacked which cannot adequately be solved by any price policy—then and only then can we with any great degree of either economic or political success abandon any significant part of our present price-support program. However, if these prior things are done, most Americans who work to secure fair treatment for agriculture would willingly agree with a simplification and even a reduction in the present level and scale of price supports.

Rural Education Group Organized

A national Association of Rural Education has recently been organized which aims to improve the effectiveness of schools in small communities by means of a nation-wide information program. This association is said to be the first of its kind in this country. Dr. Frank W. Cyr, professor of educational administration at Teachers College, Columbia University, is its executive secretary.

The Spirit of Frost's Poetry

BENSON Y. LANDIS

A wide search for ways to sum up he spirit of Robert Frost's poetry ields no one best clue. There are nany good ones. Frost is inexhaustble, and there is no accurate sumnary or simple explanation.

And were an epitaph to be my story
I'd have a short one ready for my own.
I would have written of me on my stone:
I had a lover's quarrel with the world.*

So far, so good.

Ah, when to the heart of man
Was it ever less than a treason
To go with the drift of things,
To yield with grace to reason,
And bow and accept the end
Of love or a season?

Or, consider this broad observaion:

Most of the change we think we see in life
Is due to truths being in and out of favor.
As I sit here, and oftentimes, I wish
I could be monarch of a desert land
I could devote and dedicate forever
To the truths we keep coming back and back to.

Artist Needs Only Samples

Frost's remarks appear to be casual, but actually they are incisive. Since life is contradictory, a poet conversing about the issues of life must deal often in paradox. His muse is cantankerous. In his search for the truth, he uses the cadences of simple speech to illuminate issues that are not single and simple.

His work has a regional flavor, but the meanings are obviously universal. He does not appear to be teaching, yet one may learn not only one but several things from most of his short poems. Frost has himself provided one clue: "I am fond of . . . that figure of speech in which we use a part for the whole." "All that an artist needs is samples." He knows how to blend the strange with the familiar.

Potato Brushed Clean

"There are two types of realists," Frost has explained. "There is one who offers a good deal of dirt with his potato to show that it is a real potato. And there is one who is satisfied with the potato brushed clean. I am inclined to be the second kind. To me, the thing that art does for life is to clean it, to strip it of form."

Among all these clues, and many others that could be offered, one may choose which are the most appealing. I now wish, in this my second article on Frost, to consider several of the famous poems, reserving a few others for later consideration.

"Mending Wall"

As I again approach this famous poem, I am reminded of Louis Untermeyer's warning about Frost: "He is not saying all he knows and he is not telling all he feels." The poem is, like so many others, people talking. Many poets write about people. Many of Frost's poems are the people.

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down.

This poem appeared in Frost's second book, *North of Boston*. It is spring mending-time, and on a day appointed two men "meet to walk

(*Continued on page* 8)

Photo by Eva Luoma

* Robert Frost's poems are published by Henry Holt and Company, New York. The *Complete Poems* were published, 1949, $6.00 a copy.

(*Continued from page 7*)

the line," and "keep the wall between us as we go." One muses on the forces that send walls down. The other always replies firmly: "Good fences make good neighbors." The latter will not budge. He does not elaborate. He repeats with his whole being the words his forefathers have said: "Good fences make good neighbors." And these are the final words of the poem.

In the circles where I have moved for some years, nearly every preacher of international cooperation has seized upon this poem. I understand there was one who said it was good for backing up the League of Nations. I join what is perhaps a minority party by reading this poem to mean that fences are necessary for the good life, that a man should be himself and not like his neighbor. I recall a quiet evening in Vermont, when Mr. Frost read poetry at Fletcher Farm, and remarked that when he wrote the poem he was not thinking of the nations, he was simply dealing with the common experience of neighboring farmers in New England.

Blueberries

"Blueberries as big as the end of your thumb. . . . You ought to have seen them." One can easily imagine them, "all ripe together." "Not some of them green and some of them ripe."

> The fruit mixed with water in layers of leaves,
> Like two kinds of jewels, a vision for thieves.

But with this vivid language about berries, Frost mingles an interesting human tale. A family is considered by other families, always a situation freighted with many possibilities. There is also an interesting reference to a "democrat load," which has nothing to do with people in Washington, but to one steeped in New England rural language the term refers to a certain type of wagon.

Build Soil

A "political pastoral" with the title of *Build Soil* was read at Columbia University, May 31, 1932, before the conventions of the political parties that year. It is a conversation between Tityrus, a poet who writes on a farm, and Meliboeus, "the potato man." The bad conditions on the farms are revealed. "I know wool's down to seven cents a pound." The potato man didn't sell his crop—he just consumed it.

Then into the issues: How much should Congress do? Is socialism needed, do you think?" "We have it now. For socialism is an element in any government." (This was before the New Deal.) Finally, the poet preaches to the potato man:

> Let those possess the land and only those
> Who love it with a love so strong and stupid
> That they may be abused and taken advantage of
> And made fun of by business, law, and art . . .
> Don't join too many gangs. Join few if any.
> Join the United States and join the family—
> But not much in between unless a college.

Frost once told me emphatically he was for the artist and against the reformer—the latter was always giving out and never taking anything in. He looked askance, he said, at men who must shout their values at every street corner. For himself, he was so sure of his values that he did not need to rave about them.

> I own I never really warmed
> To the reformer or reformed.

"Death of Hired Man"

One of the most widely appreciated poems is "The Death of the Hired Man." It especially defies succinct comment, because it is distinguished for numerous qualities. It abounds in matchless description of the world of nature. "Morning glory strings, taut with the dew from garden held to eaves." And "part of a moon was falling down the west." Here occur, too, the famous lines:

> Home is the place where, when you have to go there,
> They have to take you in.

It is dramatic poetry, and has been acted as a play. It makes high art with artless effort: the character most fully portrayed never appears upon the stage. The writing contains grace and power through the writer's quiet restraint.

(*This is the second article of a series. The next will interpret a national television program.*)

A Hundred Years Ago

• A hundred years ago there was first published a book named *Walden*, written several years earlier by Henry David Thoreau, of Concord, Mass. The anniversary should surely be noted in a journal whose accent is on things rural, and the values and issue of life related thereto. The voice raised at Walden is daily challenged by all of life near 297 Fourth Avenue; but I would also point out that Henry Thoreau's voice remains in constant tension, after these 100 years, against New York—also against St. Louis, St. Paul, San Antonio, Denver, San Francisco, against every metropolitan area.

On July 4, 1845, Thoreau had stamped out of Concord to reside for about two and one-quarter years in a hut he had built with his own hands, and some twenty-eight dollars in cash, on the shores of a small pond named Walden, several miles away. Here he lived on some twenty-seven cents a day. He gathered material for and wrote parts of two books, one being *Walden*, published nine years later in 1854. The land he claimed by squatter's right. I seem to have read that the land was Emerson's, who didn't seem to mind the activities of the squatter. Indeed, when Emerson was in his last illness and recalling his "best friend," he named the squatter, Henry Thoreau.

At Walden, Henry grew his famous beans, and sought to live the good life by good means. It was a sort of experiment in subsistence, consistent with other subsistence by various trades. Henry once worked hard enough to produce a big batch of pencils, which he sold for enough money to pay the deficit on one of the books that probably sells better today than in his life time.

Only recently has the precise foun-tion of the hut been located. It in the midst of the Walden Pond ıte park. I have been there since e spot was located and paused be-re the granite markers that outline e foundation. A small brass plate ıt on a cairn of stones tells about e famous resident, and on a stone at is believed to have been in his eplace there are inscribed these ords:

"Go thou my incense upward from is hearth."

—B. Y. L.

Church of the Brethren Project in Turkey

HANS-PETER MULLER

The Brethren Service project in urkey shows what can be achieved young people who have some chnical training and a social con-iousness which they translate into tion.

The farm consists of the old man-on and remaining estate (about ,000 acres of sorely neglected nd) of the Ottoman family which is been exiled in Egypt since the urkish republic was founded in 23. The Brethren Service Com-ission has rented this place and ansformed it into a cooperative rm for a group of 105 refugees—ostly Bulgarians. The two co-lead-s are twenty-one-year-old farmers om the United States.

The 105 Bulgarian, Yugoslav, Al-nian, Russian and ethnic Turkish fugees, who range in age from six-en to seventy-six, with the major-y being young, had been exposed various unpleasant influences in tanbul and were waiting for emi-ation to Canada, or for new devel-oments. The fact that they did not now what to do with their spare me was detrimental to their mo-le.

Although the cooperative farm nnot be called an international ork camp, the development of co-peration between the two Ameri-ns and the refugees of various na-onalities shows a team spirit very nilar to that in a good work camp. he two leaders sit at the same table th the refugees, eat the same food, and wash their own dishes after meals. Instead of giving directions, they lead in the ploughing and other farm work. Instead of making theo-retical suggestions about recreation, they play volleyball and other games with the refugees.

One way of winning the confi-dence of the local farmers was to interest them in having their land ploughed by tractor. After some suc-cessful experiments, many of these farmers were eager to pay the ex-pense of fuel and the normal wages for the work of the driver and his helper. The money earned in this way went back into the cooperative-farm fund. Many other farmers soon requested such help and within six-teen days the tractor ploughed a total of more than fifty-five acres for them.

Then began another form of co-operation. Some of the refugees spent their spare time working on the in-dividual farms of the surrounding small holders, the latter paying them either in money or "in kind." When the writer of this record was at the farm, about twenty of the refugees were helping the peasants build barns and houses, dig ditches and prepare gardens.

My general impression of the co-operative farm was that many refu-gees regained their self-respect and confidence and were better prepared to meet whatever the future might hold for them.

—From *Brethren Service News*

Self Help Projects

• Two-thirds of our world's citizen-ry live in constant fear of starvation today. The Christian Church, how-ever, is awakening to this new area of responsibility and many "help them to help themselves" projects are in progress all over the globe. You can help these people by sup-plying tools with which they can work—with which they can raise their own food. Crude wooden tools must be replaced by better designed steel tools.

Tools that are needed for the work of re-habilitation:

Hand Tools	*Carpentry Tools*
Shovel	Saw
Pick	Square
Hoe	Draw Knife
Rake	Hammer
Mattock	Rasp
Pitch Fork	Level
Ax	Wrecking Bar
Sledge	Rule
Steel Wedge	
Hatchet	
Cross Cut saw	*Masonry Supplies*
Pruning Tools	Trowels
Scythe	Plumb Bob
Spade	Brick Hammer

Small hand tools, carpentry tools and masonry supplies should be shipped to the Brethren Service Center near-est you—New Windsor, Maryland *or* Nappanee, Indiana.

—From *Brethren Service News*

The Federated Church of Whitewater, Kansas

It was in the late 1920's that the laymen from the Lutheran, Re-formed and Christian Churches in the vicinity of Whitewater, under the able guidance of the pastor of the Lutheran Church, started to work towards federation.

The Methodist Church was asked to join in the effort, but the District Superintendent of the denomination didn't approve of federation so, for over twenty years, there were only two churches in the town—Federated and Methodist, one strong and the other weak.

Then came a general realization that federation without a tie-in with the larger stream of Christianity was to end in futility. To tie in with other federations, however, would be to return to a new kind of denomi-nationalism. So we joined the Con-gregationlists in 1950.

During the past two years the Federated Church of Whitewater has found new impetus and new di-rection. A men's club has been or-ganized which parallels the strength of the women's group. A community council has been initiated and a civilian defense group has been or-ganized.

The Federated Church is growing in strength, in outreach, and in com-munity programming.

—Louis G. Poppe

Isolated Church Offers Worship and Handicraft

• At Madeline Island, three miles off the Wisconsin mainland, and about seventy-five miles north-east of Duluth, Minnesota, the Evangelical and Reformed minister and his wife are carrying on an arts and crafts industry which has brought new life and a source of income to the church and community.

It was in 1951 that the Rev. Otto W. Schroedel went to this isolated spot, and Mrs. Schroedel started to teach the islanders how to weave their native materials into rugs and table linens. Additional looms have been purchased or donated from time to time and other forms of handicraft have been started until now the manse and church are not large enough to house the equipment, and a workshop and loom house are being built. All of the products are finding a ready market with summer vacationers, and the year-round residents are busy and happy.

"On the Contour"

A collection of ten sermons on rural life, bearing the title given above, has recently been published by The Area Commission on Town and Country Work of the Methodist Church in Iowa. The sermons included in this volume were chosen from those submitted in a state-wide contest among the Methodist churches of Iowa.

The title of this book, "On the Contour," is also the title of the winning sermon in the contest. It was submitted by Rev. Roy Brown who relates the values of contour farming and contour living.

Other contestants, whose sermons are included in this volume, are R. Maynard Bell, R. A. McBlain, Trevor Baskerville, Mrs. W. D. Dimmlich, R. R. Ritter, Mrs. Chris Knack, Arthur D. Holtry, Herbert Thomas, and Franklin Groomes.

On the Contour may be secured from the Rev. John L. Beebout, Malvern, Iowa, or the Rev. Donald Koontz, Simpson College, Indianola, Iowa, for 75 cents a copy.

They're Winning the Fringe

BETTY WESTROM

• The Beitel Memorial Lutheran Church near San Antonio, Texas, is now ready to minister to its new neighbors in the mushrooming "fringe" area. The neat new brick church building with its simple modified Spanish architecture will tell you that, even before you've heard about its parish life.

The tiny white frame building which had served as a house of worship for a group of German Lutheran farmers since 1904 had acquired a weary look through the years. The congregation, resolving to reach the "city people" who were building homes in a widening circle beyond the city's limits, recognized the importance of having a building which looked "open for business." In 1952 the church was built.

Transition

Those pioneers who erected the little frame church out in the open country would be astonished to see the area today. Streams of large trucks and modern automobiles roar by the church on the four-lane highway which connects Austin and San Antonio. Two large military air bases are within easy reach, and the air above the church is often alive with bombers.

Agriculture has not retreated completely from the area. During this transitional period the farmers who grew up in Beitel Church have as their neighbors those who work in San Antonio's industrial plants and commute to their work each day. The new community which is emerging is thus composed of residents of completely different backgrounds.

The New Church

It was the Rev. George Krueger who in 1946 led his congregation to think about improving the church's facilities so that newcomers might be drawn into the fellowship. Committees made plans, but the pastor was called away to serve another church before these plans could be carried out.

Pastor John Winter arrived to become pastor of the church in 1951 and the members resolved to go through with the building program. The members of the church dismantled the familiar landmark so that usable material might be made a part of the new church building. For several months while the new building was going up, services were held in the Dodds Field Chapel at Fort Sam Houston.

By June of 1952 the building had been completed, but an attractive physical plant alone cannot bridge the gap between groups of people who have not learned to be neighbors.

Community Service

Church members saw opportunities to become acquainted with both "city folks" and farm people who had never been members of the church. When the polio "Mothers March" was held, the women of the church were out ringing doorbells and many made it a point to join in the activities of organized groups.

Although the pastor's wife had never been a devotee of poultry raising, she showed her interest in the rural women of the community by joining a Farm Bureau home demonstration group which that year was studying poultry-raising. Before she joined the group, only one woman of the church was a member. Now, twelve women of the church are included in the membership. These contacts have brought about new friendships, with both church and community reaping the benefits.

Even a disastrous tornado provided a rallying point for members of the church who sensed the need for community building. The church took the initiative by giving $13 from the Ladies' Aid treasury and publicizing the fund through the church bulletin and radio broadcasts. More than $1,000 came in through church channels, while a much larger sum was given direct

the needy families. The city and
e country, the churches and the
churched found unity in a com-
on cause.

Even with these community activi-
s paving the way, however, neigh-
rliness has not sprung up full-
own. Many old-time residents con-
ue to visit only those they know,
d ease of transportation makes it
ssible for new residents to main-
in their ties with friends in the
y.

y Participation

After a preliminary survey of the
ea the pastor has attempted to en-
t lay people in evangelism visita-
on groups. Although this effort has
en slow in getting started, a sys-
matic approach promises to in-
ease the church's influence.

Baptized membership has in-
eased from 203 in 1948 to 410 to-
y. What do these new members
d when they step inside the door
Beitel Church? They see a church-
building, not the unattractive
akeshift which some rural churches
nsider "good enough for the coun-
y." A brass cross on the oak altar
backgrounded by a red dossal
rtain. There is red carpeting down
e center aisle, and a robed choir
one side of the chancel.

There is a wide range of ages in
e small choir, which sings simple,
autiful chorales. Organ music ac-
mpanies the hymns. In contrast
th some rural churches which use
very informal order of worship,
is congregation follows the full

The old church had a weary look

Beitel Memorial Lutheran Church

common liturgical service of the Lutheran Church, chanting the prayer responses with devotion and dignity. At the close of the service visitors are greeted warmly.

New members who are qualified are enlisted in Sunday school work, thereby giving them a sense of belonging and also bringing their leadership possibilities to the attention of the older members.

The growth of the departmentalized Sunday school has already set church members to thinking about more classroom space.

When a home for boys moved into the area, church members volunteered to provide transportation to carry them four miles to Sunday school.

All along the highway there are trailer courts and cabin courts. Some of the people living in the courts are army personnel, some are winter residents, and others are living quite permanently in trailers or cabins.

Children from these courts have been enrolled in the Sunday school at the church. Although many of them are transients, it is a type of population which will perhaps always be a part of the community; and the transients, too, find at Beitel Memorial a church home.

The Program

For the last two summers, Vacation Bible School has been a part of the church's program. This special educational effort provides an opportunity for the church to reach the newcomers.

When a new group is received in the church by the rite of confirmation or by transfer, they are special guests at "Family Night." Members of the previous class form a committee to make all the plans. Thus they are given a responsibility in the church almost immediately. Each succeeding class becomes the committee for the next reception.

Beitel Memorial Church does not believe that the same members should hold office year after year. A proposed new by-law to the parish constitution will implement this policy of "passing the jobs around." When the bylaw goes into effect, no member will be eligible for re-election to the Council before the expiration of one year after serving a full term.

Plans are being completed for a fiftieth anniversary celebration of the church in 1954. Beitel Memorial Lutheran Church begins its second half-century with a genuinely youthful zest for progress. With energetic cheerfulness the parish is making the shift from rural church to "rurban" church, recognizing only that Christ's commission is to bring the Gospel to the people—to *all* the people.

The 4-H Club in West Virginia

• Here are some significant figures: The enrollment in the West Virginia 4-H Club program in 1953 was 29,908, including 12,371 boys and 17,537 girls. Of the 29,908 enrollment 13,501 members came from farm homes, 12,101 from rural non-farm homes, and 4,306 from urban homes. Note first that there were 5,166 more girls than boys sharing in the program. Second, note that 16,407 came from non-farm homes and that 4,306 of these were from urban homes. Why are there so many more girls sharing in the 4-H program than boys? What is the relationship between those coming from the urban homes and those from farm homes and from non-farm homes?

The above figures indicate that some very significant changes are taking place in West Virginia. Apparently the 4-H program is a bridge in bringing about closer relationships between rural and urban homes. What adjustments are being made in adapting the program to meet the needs of boys and girls living in the non-farm and urban homes?

What evidence do we have that schools, churches and other agencies interested in helping meet the material, educational, social and spiritual needs of boys and girls and families living in the rural non-farm homes are aware of the changes that have and will continue to take place? We have made real progress in helping rural folk become more aware of the fact that they are consciously and unconsciously partners of God in tilling the soil and in meeting the needs of growing plant and animal life. This recognized or unrecognized partnership has been a tremendous factor in stabilizing family life and in the development of a sense of mission and destiny in individual and community life.

How can we help men working in the factory, the garage, the office, the hospital, in the schoolroom, through our churches and in all normal, helpful activities feel the sense of relationship and comradeship of God that many living close to nature now sense and feel? This greatly to be desired goal can only be realized by giving God the place that belongs to him in the factory, in the garage, in the hospital, in the school, in fact in every normal activity of life. The only hope for our civilization lies in bridging the wide gap between what we term the sacred and secular areas of life. Things are not secular. They become secular only to the extent that we leave God out of our lives and our activities.

—Aaron H. Rapking

From Correspondence

Dear Editor:

The September issue of Town and Country Church contains an article about a rural church pilgrimage in Washington which is very interesting, especially the last sentence: "This plan could well be used on an interdenominational basis." Well, that is just what we are doing in Illinois! You will find enclosed the program for the third such interdenominational pilgrimage sponsored by the Town and Country Commission of the Illinois Church Council within the year.

Our first pilgrimage included the following churches in the area of Springfield, Illinois: Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, Evangelical and Reformed, Church of the Brethren. The second included the following churches in the area of Champaign and Douglas Counties, Illinois: Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, Evangelical and Reformed, Congregational Christian. You will note that the third pilgrimage has two new denominations included: Dutch Reformed and Evangelical United Brethren. The omission of Methodist and Presbyterian is due simply to our inability to find time enough to fit more churches into the day's program, and not to unwillingness on their part to participate.

Our results have been uniformly better than we expected, and we are continually amazed by the splendid fellowship developed in these pilgrimages. I call them "ecumenicity at the grass roots."

—Ralph W. Heller
Broadlands, Illinois

Off the Beaten Path

• Near Bangor, Maine, last summer I asked at a drug store for a "local" paper. I was offered one published at Bangor, but said I would like one brought out in a smaller place. I was then handed a copy of the *Ellsworth American,* which was more to my liking. I noted that this weekly was No. 32, in its 104th year.

In the course of a drive into several states I had decided to pay special attention to the non-metropolitan press. I found vigorous dailies in unexpected places. I found that in Quakertown, Pa., the *Free Press,* a weekly for generations, now comes out Tuesdays and Fridays, and the Editor vows he will soon have a daily. He also operates a vigorous local radio station. Some day I am going to explore more fully the role of the local vs. the metropolitan radio broadcasts.

In the *Ellsworth American,* I read that a retired skipper had invited Harry Truman to sail with him in the Maine retired skippers' race, a contest sponsored by the Bucksport Lions Club. I could find no reference to an invitation to Herbert Hoover or Dwight Eisenhower, and for one short spell I began to wonder. But as I am a member of the staff of the National Council of Churches, and thus unlearned in politics, my wonderment was soon put aside. The retired skipper told Mr. Truman that he would get some Down East Cooking that "will give you back your sealegs."

At Surry, Maine, the Reorganized Church of Latter Day Saints served lobster stew, all you could eat for the fee, for the building fund. The stew was made by a "real Down East chef," who came from Jonesport, farther East than Surry.

My greatest regret in the course of the trip was that I could not reach the Sullivan Circuit, east of Ellsworth, where the Rev. Margaret Henrichsen is the pastor. Mrs. Henrichsen is both a devoted pastor and a writer of excellence, whose book *Seven Steeples* was reviewed in Town and Country Church.

I think I should give the Rev Mrs. Henrichsen's schedule for the

unday following, as printed in the *llsworth American*:

9:30	A.M.	Sorrento
10:45	A.M.	Asheville
1:00	P.M.	Franklin
2:30	P.M.	Gouldsboro
5:45	P.M.	North Sullivan
7:15	P.M.	Prospect Harbor

That is the way it was printed. or explanations, one may perhaps rite Mrs. Henrichsen at North ullivan, Maine. (This woman min-ster now writes a most interesting olumn in *Zion's Herald,* the Meth-dist journal published in Boston.)

From the Bennington, Vt. *Even-ng Banner,* daily, I gleaned that the ermont State Grange observed "Go o Church Sunday," August 15. On age one I saw an explanation of uch of the World's trouble: "There oesn't seem to be enough horse ense to go with all the horse power e have!" (While in Vermont I lso picked up the observation that, With all this progress we don't eem to be getting anywhere"; also he prediction that the world is now aking so much progress that one ill soon have to pay extra to get read unsliced.)

In Arlington, Vt., where Dorothy anfield Fisher lives, the people ave organized a historical society. n the town of Shaftsbury, where I nce visited Robert Frost on a farm hich he no longer occupies, the in-reasing school population is a big roblem. Seems there are forty pupils er teacher in the schools. The voters ad, however, just decided not to pend $20,000 to erect another class-oom.

In Maine I saw in print a line to he effect that when two tired New orkers enter a Maine village, then civilization really arrives." But I asten to explain that it is said in uch a way as to arouse skepticism r to indicate that Maine does not elieve it. In conversation I ran into he term "summer money." "In July he summer money arrives." Ap-arently the people of Maine no nger refer to the tourists, but just o the money. As for me, I will de-end the older culture or civilization f Yarmouth or Castine or Sullivan r its integrity and authenticity. It seems to me closer to the natural order than the disillusionment expressed by tired New Yorkers. It has to do with cooperation in the processes of living at first hand. In New York, tired people engage hurriedly in impersonal activities far from the food and lumber and fiber that one finds in Maine. But the summer money has added bath rooms and paint and art and piano recitals.

The Bucksport, Maine, *Free Press* came along with an item much too modern for this traveler: "The Parent-Teachers Club of Orland will have a foodless food sale during the week of August 15." Again, fuller explanation would be welcome.

The Bridgeton, Maine, *News* tells about the initial efforts of crews installing a dial telephone system. This is the area where you must not be surprised to read about the Norway-South Paris juvenile band. Not far away are both China and South China. The last was long the home of Rufus Jones, who loved to return in the summers and speak in the meeting house. China, you may wish to know, was named not after a nation but after an old hymn tune, which, according to Dr. Jones, did not aid in the salvation of many souls.

There was also a new Cape Cod house advertised in the Bridgeton *News,* "for sale in Denmark," (Maine).

—B. Y. L.

The Village of Blarney

• Not far from Cork is a village more famous than many cities, 'tis said in Ireland. It is found where the Shournagh River, "small, tumbling, and twisting," joins the celebrated Lee. What other village has given its name to become adjective, noun and verb to the world? There is said to be only one, and its name is Blarney.

The people of the small village of Blarney make tweeds, but their cloth has not brought them their great fame. A simple stone has done it. The stone rests in the parapet of a castle, built by one MacCarthy in the 15th century. (The builder was descended from a Spanish hero, who in turn was descended from Noah, it is said in the neighborhood of Blarney.)

If one gets into an uncomfortable position, one can kiss the Blarney Stone. It is best to be held by two friends as one goes through the operation. The power of the stone is then reflected in the speech. It was first revealed to the castle's builder when, on the eve of testifying for a lawsuit, he met the Queen of the Fairies who advised him on arising to kiss a stone from the banks of the Lee. At the trial his tongue never lacked for words.

A guide in Ireland once told me that the only training the guides of tourists in Dublin ever get is one visit to the South for a kiss of the Blarney Stone. (The record quoted is from *Lovely is the Lee,* by Robert Gibbings, Dutton, 1945.)

—B. Y. L.

Centennial Celebration

• It was a year ago in August that Montgomery County, Iowa celebrated its Centennial. Everyone in the county cooperated to make the pageant and other festivities successful. On the opening day—Sunday, August 23, 1953—religion was given special emphasis. The Ministerial Association planned the program for this day, and their efforts resulted in having a 320-voice choir sing before a congregation of approximately 5,500 people, with Dr. E. Stanley Jones as speaker, and the local Roman Catholic priest on the platform.

According to Asa C. Popp, minister of the First Baptist Church at Red Oak, the entire month of August was spent in preparations. The preacher set the style for men by growing a beard and the women wore long dresses and bonnets.

Interests in the Centennial Religious Service was so universal that another great religious event was planned for August 22nd of this year. Attractions on that day included a choir of about the same number of voices as that of the previous year, and Dr. Reuben Youngdahl, Lutheran minister from Minneapolis, as the principal speaker.

Lord, Touch Me!

FLORENCE ZIEGLER SANGER

Lord, touch my eyes that I may see
True vision of thy love for me,
And of thy love for all mankind,
That I my calling sure may find.

Lord, touch my lips that they may sing
The glories of my God and King;
That I may tell to all the earth
My Savior's matchless grace and worth.

Lord, touch my hands that they may bless
The needy with their helpfulness;
That they may soothe the pain of those
Who bear earth's sickness, fear and woes.

Lord, touch my feet that they may go
Only where thou alone canst show,
The path of selfless sacrifice
Though hurt and thorns may be the price.

Lord, touch my heart that it may ache
With others' troubles. It may break
As thy heart broke on Calvary,
But can I shrink from following thee?

Lord, touch my life through all its years!
With thee I have no doubts or fears.
In thee I find release from strife;
I enter everlasting life!

—Reprinted, with permission, from *Gospel Messenger.*

The Farmer Says Grace

• Beloved Foreman, who in the beginning worked for six days and rested on the seventh and saw that the job was very good, help us likewise to honor sweat, exhalt skill and dignify labor.

Above all we pray that we may do honest work for a fair wage as free men 'round the globe—whether on range or steppes, in cornfield or rice paddy, at forge or desk, farm or factory.

For fruitful fall and ripening frost we are glad.

—SAMUEL R. GUARD

Four Readings

• Few writings—if any—move me as much as those of Dorothy Day in the *Catholic Worker,* 223 Chrystie Street, New York 2, N.Y. I watch the *Catholic Worker,* the periodical, for references to the farms operated as houses of hospitality for the poor. The *Worker* is a movement, as well as a periodical, and it is said that in certain circles people constantly marvel at the miracle of the existence of the movement and the paper.

"It is the Lord's doing." The workers never intended to run the kind of places of hospitality they now run. They simply began to print Peter Maurin's ideas on hospitality. "We were just a few, but there was always room for one more at the table, always enough food to share, always a place to bed down one more. (A mother and baby are sleeping in our dining room at one of the farms.)"

Miss Day writes that they long for the freedom of a St. Francis, but it seems the Lord intends them to work as they do, "since he sends the destitute in such numbers, and sends us, too, our friends and readers to help us."

They look "around the house with its large family, much as parents look at the mouths to be fed and the bodies to be clothed—and wonder how we manage with so many." One explanation is a letter sent to readers, which contained these words:

"St. Joseph, this is your month. . . . You lived. . . . at hard manual labor, and you surely understood concerning the needy and the poor. You were without shelter when you hunted a bed for a wife about to have a child; you must have suffered with hunger and thirst in that journey across the desert into a strange land where you were supposed to have lived seven years. We beg you to move the hearts of our readers, so that when we tell them how broke we are, how high the bills are piled for groceries, for fuel, for light, they will be moved to help us, by their prayers and alms giving.

The new, enlarged *Organic Gar dening and Farming,* Emmaus, Pa. edited and published by J. I. Rodale stressing "the natural way in garden ing and farming," has become a most attractive and comprehensive periodical. Mr. Rodale's interest wa first aroused by the writings of Si Albert Howard, a British civil serv ant, who noted the natural method of agriculture in Indore, India.

Lately there has been rich histori cal material. I learned about the pioneering work of Solomon Drown of Providence, R. I., who was a surgeon in George Washington' army, and became professor o botany at Brown University, Provi dence, in 1811. He started writin about legumes, plowing adapted t hillside cultivation, cover crops green manuring. He had alread discovered processes of deterioratio of the soil. Apparently there wer wise men before our time, and ther may be wise men coming after us.

If American farmers want to kno what controls on farms really are and how numerous they are, the might read a weekly paper fro North Ireland, some numbers o which recently came to my hands This is *The Newtonards Chronicl and County Down Observer.*

Many ploughing competitions ar announced. There is a notice abou a "calf rearing subsidy scheme." T potato growers there is somethin about a "guaranteed market." If yo live in North Ireland, you can onl import chrysanthemums of a variet not "at present obtainable" com mercially, and you may not bring i a plant for sale unless you first ge a license from the Ministry of Agr culture. You also can't buy a bab chick except from a hatchery l censed by the Ministry. (When I wa in Northern Ireland in 1949, a dair farmer told me the government tol him how much feed he could bu for his cattle.) There is also a wage board which sets minimum wages fo farm labor. The spirit of the pape is what I most wish to notice. It much like that of our own weeklie

ıe Young Farmers held a "well-ended dance" and there was a ery good turn out" for a special b race. The Comber Presbyterian urch has opened a "magnificent w hall." The crime news is ndled with perspective. And all is different and so refreshing and so ormal, when one contrasts it with speed and impersonal quality of smart city papers of our time.

Finally, a neighbor lends me veral issues of a journal which is the British landed gentry still in-ested in short horns and soil con-vation. I read a well-illustrated ticle: "The American Farmer is vare of the great Importance of il Conservation," by Gertrude ardy, a British woman who had aveled throughout U.S.A.

There is a Cattle Breeders' Club ourse, at Cambridge, conducted at e university level. Farmers have portunities to pick the minds of e Cambridge scientists. Reclama-on work is going on intensively on e Isle of Man. Oxford has held its eventh Mixed Farming Confer-ce."

The Horticultural Correspondent rites a long article on "Raising the rly Vegetables." At the great untry houses, as elsewhere, strenu-s efforts are made to get early ops under glass. What startled me ost was a photo of new potatos ised under glass by planting a ngle tuber in a large pot of loamy il. There were about fifteen pots a bench in a greenhouse.

A most thorough article on the othamsted Agricultural Experi-ent Station, by L. F. Newman, ld about the varied work carried . Rothamsted is said to be the dest experiment station in the orld. It was established by an en-owment, and now gets some public nds. It has about 1,000 plots of nd, some of which have been under eady scientific cultivation for over ne hundred years. Rothamsted is quired to maintain a number of ese "classical plots." It is good to now that a piece of soil can be lled a classic. One may hope that e American will follow this leader-ip!

—Benson Y. Landis

Mennonite Journal

• An interesting periodical, *The Mennonite Community,* has been renamed *Christian Living,* a magazine for home and community (Scottdale, Pa.). The June issue, which we went through recently, had articles on the relief work in Germany, the conditions among migrants in the Southwest, and Millet's painting, *The Angelus.*

There was also a reprint from the Geauga, Ohio, *Times Leader.* Mennonite folk gathered one day before a huge mobile canning plant at the big sale barn of the Middlefield Livestock Commission.

Before the day was over the people in their plain clothes had canned 4,000 quarts of beef. It was all a gift from the people to the hungry overseas. The news account was published under the title, "In the Name of Christ."

BOOK REVIEWS

Building a Better Home Town. By H. Clay Tate. Harper and Brothers, New York. 1954. $3.50.

The author of this book is editor of *The Daily Pantograph,* Bloomington, Illinois. As editor, he has cooperated with the state university and community leaders in efforts to build strong communities. These united efforts have become known as the Bloomington Experiment.

This book is written as a report of progress but it is much more than that. Actually, about half of the book is a report of progress—concise and stimulating of what has happened: how Stanford got a resident physican; the sensitivity of Colfax for the feelings of neighboring villages during school reorganization; the industrial and business development of Roanoke; the growth of community consciousness in Lexington; and numerous other signs of vitality and adaptability. These summaries are well written and give assurance that our society has strength and a potentially bright future.

But the most important contribution of the book is the philosophy set forth. A few quotations will show the direction of the author's thinking:

"Unless we can find ways to restore to the individual a greater degree of control over his own destiny, the great American experiment will have failed. Man cannot enjoy the luxury of freedom in a centralized society." (P. 7)

"The much cherished right to strike and the equally cherished right of management to stop production cannot be tolerated in a centralized society. Either the right must be abrogated in the face of realities or society must be decentralized. Centralization makes it necessary to destroy liberty." (P. 9)

Rural America has suffered tremendous human erosion "because we have applied new machinery to old methods in the farm belt. Instead of putting machinery to work to process the crops of the land at the source, we have used it to replace man labor. Thus both people and raw material have been sluiced away from the agrarian areas of the nation in one of the greatest erosion binges in history." (P. 15)

"What is causing unrest in the trouble spots of the world? There are complex causes, of course, but high on the list in nearly every instance is the desire for land reform. Communism has bought its way into many freedom-loving countries with a promise to divide the landed estates among those who till the land. It is a false promise, of course, but it reveals the deep-seated yearning for the right to own and till the soil. If the present trend of enlarging farms and depleted rural population continues in this country, we may face the same problem." (P. 18)

"Here, then, is the new mission field for the church. Here is a challenge to stop feeding the hand that chokes the spirit and begin to grasp the hand that can elevate the spirit. The church and religion will crumble under the unfriendly weight of centralization, as they are being crushed in those countries championing centralization today. Decentra-

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lization is a matter of survival for Christianity. And, since Christianity is the source and strength of our civilization, decentralization must be encouraged or that which we cherish is lost." (P. 67)

"If only the youth of the nation will see these things! I would like to close this book as it was begun: Go home, young man, and build a better community."

—DON F. PIELSTICK

George Herbert: His Religion and Art. By Joseph H. Summers. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1954. $4.25.

George Herbert was public orator at Cambridge University 1619 to 1627, after which he became a clergyman. He who had associated with nobles and kings became the devoted rector at Bremerton. In this country parish he wrote the famous work, *A Priest to the Temple,* which was not the title Herbert gave the book. He called it simply, "The Country Parson," and he wrote it as a manual for almost every situation. Portions of this book were reprinted some years ago in TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH. At Bremerton, Herbert also finished the poems that make up his *The Temple,* which students of English literature have long studied and admired.

In this book the assumption is made that "George Herbert, the parson-poet of seventeenth-century England, is one of the best lyric poets who has written in the English language." Mr. Summers notes that Herbert's work has been admired by those who stressed the literary quality, and also by those who have appreciated the piety. But he writes a work to abolish the dualism. He states at the outset that the poetry and the religion "are intimately and inextricably interrelated in *The Temple.*"

This is a scholarly study. Mr. Summers has taught at Bard College and Harvard, and is now on the faculty of the University of Connecticut. Although the main attention is given to the poetry, there is a good account of the life of the poet-parson. It is clear that no parson ever paid more attention to form than did Herbert. This form became a vehicle of witness of a holy life. Herbert was as much concerned with "the proper language" in the pulpit as in the poems. Yet *A Priest to the Temple* "continually returns to the holy life," concludes Mr. Summers.

Some of Herbert's experience was summed up in his line of poetry: "A verse may find him, who a sermon flies."

—BENSON Y. LANDIS

Memoirs of a Country Preacher. By Harvey E. Swihart. Published by the author, 1954. $1.00.

This is an interesting autobiography of the life and work of a country preacher who served a number of rural circuits for the United Brethren Church (now Evangelical United Brethren) in northern Indiana.

Following his marriage, Mr. Swihart attended college and took postgraduate work. He taught in a business college for three years, then worked at the Terminal Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad, in Indianapolis, where he advanced rapidly and soon became chief clerk.

After ten years of lucrative employment, Mr. Swihart resigned his position and sold his newly built house at great loss. He and his wife and three children moved into a two-room log cabin in the country, where they cared for Mrs. Swihart's aged father and insane mother. While living in this humble way on meager fare, another set of twins was born.

During these rugged years Mr. Swihart was converted and accepted the call to the Christian ministry, which he served more than twenty years. His denomination first sent him to a decadent charge which provided a maximum salary of $800 a year, out of which he had to support a family of six, maintain an automobile, keep a son in college, and two others in high school. But even this field developed into a fruitful and happy parish.

The Reverend Mr. Swihart is now retired from the ministry, but he preaches occasionally and serves as statistician of his conference. Throughout his trying experiences he has been able to see only God's providential leading. His "Memoirs" conclude with one of his sermons.

—C. R. SWARTZ

"The Country Poet"

A quarterly, *The Country Poet,* is published at Sanbornville, N. H. by Edwin P. Geauque. It is printed in an attractive format at the Wake-Brook Press, producers of beautiful hand-bound books. Included, with selections of contemporary poetry, are reproductions of paintings and photographs.

A recent issue contains almost three score works, ranging from short pieces with four lines to a few that take two pages. The locales are varied. We have Grace Noll Smith's "The Red River Valley," and Sue Hale Walbridge's "Winter: Puget Sound." D. Vincent Smith's "Wild Heron," about the "white birds of loneliness" could have been written wherever herons fly "against the winter sky" . . . "with no pretensions."

Alan N. Hall's "Enchantment to the South" extends "to the Caribbees." Louise Darcy's "Winter: Canary Islands" refers to lands where "jasmine scents the ocean breeze." Grace E. Donenwirth's "Evangel" points to the poinsettia as a "Symbol of One who comes in love." In "A Tourist Went to Bethlehem," by Harriet Stanton Place, it is remarked that "It is such a little land . . . To have such power to mould . . . And so much love unfold."

Various Christmas poems include Beth Duvall Russell's "Prayer for Advent," including these lines:

> "Lord, blaze the Bethlehem sky anew
> To pierce man's sodden senses through."

All in all, a periodical worthy of examination by all interested in the broad literature of rural life. The minister who quotes poetry frequently should try it for a year. The library anxious to encompass the rural cultural arts should investigate